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20 June 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Meeting with Dr. Ernst Brueckner, Chief of SG, Bonn

1. As requested I met Dr. Ernst Brueckner, Chief of the SG, Bonn, in company with [] the evening of Monday, 18 June 1956. I joined Brueckner, [] in the cocktail lounge of the Hotel Willard a few minutes after 6:00 P.M. and stayed with them through a subsequent dinner at Harvey's Restaurant on Connecticut Avenue and a nightcap at [] house. All in all I spent approximately five hours with Dr. Brueckner. Brueckner had been briefed by [] that he would meet me and had been told that I was interested in German affairs. I met Dr. Brueckner under my true name.

2. The evenings conversations with Dr. Brueckner ranged over a wide field including the general situation in Germany, German literature and music, food, and intelligence matters. The latter point was first touched upon when I asked Dr. Brueckner as to the value of his present trip. He stated that he was overwhelmed by the program that had been laid on for him and that it opened his eyes to the great deficiencies which existed in the West German internal security structure. He said flatly that he is dissatisfied with it and that Germany would have to go a long way until a satisfactory situation could be achieved. I replied that I was well aware of the problems facing him and others responsible for internal security since it had been one of my responsibilities to assist in the establishment of LfV, Bavaria. This led naturally into a discussion of the BfV and the question to what extent the BfV had recovered from the "John affair." Brueckner replied that the "John affair" was such a heavy mortgage on the BfV that "the whole house may have to be put up for forced sale (he used the word *zwangsversteigert*)." He explained later on that he did not think of the abolishment of the BfV but of a radical internal reorganization not only personnel-wise but also of its legal basis. In particular he feels that the federal structure and the present relationship between the BfV and the LfVs is untenable. He called it "*hörnverbrannt*." In his opinion, communist subversion in any given country can not be effectively countered or neutralized by a number of basically independent offices since the communist movement is world wide and centrally directed. As matters stand at the present time there is nothing to stop the lowest case officer in the Bavarian LfV to keep to himself the running of an operation against a hostile intelligence agent if he or his superiors do not desire to ask advice or guidance from the BfV or SG. He further criticized that personnel selections of LfV personnel is primarily based on such personnel's political acceptance by the

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respective land governments. Following this thought further, Brueckner feels that particularly the LFV's have in too many instances been used for party political purposes. Another contributing factor to the unsatisfactory status of the German internal security situation is the fact that the three western allies have tried and partially succeeded in selling their respective systems to the West Germans without, however, pointing out what the drawbacks of these systems are. Compounding this, no centralized study has been made by the Federal Republic to establish a list of criteria geared to the specific West German situation and then evolve an internal security system which meets these requirements. Perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, Dr. Brueckner stated that the BfV should have been established at about the time that it was but should have worked for the first three years as he put it "for fun." With this he meant that the BfV should not have been expected to achieve tangible results but that this should have been a training period which would have given the personnel an opportunity to learn to know and work with each other and to eliminate the difficulties as have occurred. In fact his proposal is similar to the dry run which is standard procedure for anybody who intends to publish a new newspaper or magazine.

3. Regarding Otto John, Brueckner stated that his selection as President of the BfV was most unfortunate and the clearest example of the malfunction of a screening procedure which relies entirely on files and papers. It is his judgement that a half hour discussion between the then Federal Minister of the Interior and Otto John would have shown conclusively that John was unsuitable for proposed position. Brueckner characterized John as an unstable personality, emotionally unbalanced, incapable of having a normal relationship with the other sex (all such relationships were with women considerably older than John), having a streak of playboy but at the same time a driving ambition for high positions. In pursuing this further I got Brueckner to expound the following theory: John felt the necessity to strengthen his rather insecure position as President of the BfV by going into the East Sector of Berlin. He used Dr. Wohlgemuth for this purpose and fully expected to be able to return to the West Sector the same evening. Brueckner disbelieves that Wohlgemuth was trying to lure Dr. John into the East on behalf of the RIS. He also thinks that the East Germans never had any plan for the exploitation of John and that John returned to the West when he finally became aware of this fact. Concerning Wohlgemuth, Brueckner ventured the guess that Wohlgemuth may return to the West to testify on the events of the evening of 20 July 1954 and, while I did not press him on this point, I had the impression that West German authorities may be engaged in offering a "safe conduct" to Wohlgemuth. This feeling on my part was enhanced when Brueckner informed me in answer to a question that no arrest warrant was or is outstanding against Wohlgemuth. While Brueckner was completely open in discussing the general internal security situation in Germany, he was definitely reserved in discussing the details of the present status of the John case. Since I did not want

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to give the impression of being officially concerned with the John case, I did not pursue it further when I observed Brueckner's sensitivity on this score.

4. I found Brueckner an extremely pleasant person to talk to. To the extent that he revealed himself during this evening I would describe him as a typical example of a German civil servant in the best sense of the word. He is a man of wide interests with a thorough appreciation of modern literature and music, open minded toward other nations with an unquestionable adherence to the values of what the Germans call the Christian Abendland. Typical for him is the stress which he laid upon, without it being an empty boast, that he and his family lived completely on the official rations during the period 1945 to 1948 when almost nobody in Germany did so. He is undoubtedly grateful to all the opportunities which CIA has afforded him during his visits here in 1954 and 1956 but I do not judge that anything we could do for him would ever be enough of an inducement to forget the oath that he swore as a German civil servant. In short, Brueckner constitutes a valuable liaison asset who will go a long way to assist us professionally and discuss professional matters, but who could not be recruited as an agent. Conversely, his relationship with us would suffer considerably or would cease altogether if he would catch us that we are not dealing honestly with him, not to speak of if he would uncover operations which we are running against the West German government.



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